

boundary walls of container 4 the required minimum free space that is necessary to permit free movement of the fibers (column 3, line 71, through column 4, line 8). Container 4 is supplied with fresh pulp by conduit 6, while container 5 is supplied with water by conduit 13. Care is taken to keep the pulp in container 4 in sufficiently rapid motion to prevent flocculation of the fibers (column 4, lines 12-16). If necessary, the air space in head box 1 above liquid levels 8, 8a can be kept either, above or below atmospheric pressure, depending on whether conduit 23 is connected to a source of compressed air or vacuum (column 4, lines 24-28).

In contrast, claim 8, as amended, recites in part:

distributing a pressurized flow of slurry . . . across a width of said forming fabric to form said continuous web; and

ejecting at least a portion of the pressurized fluid against at least one of said forming fabric and said continuous web.

(Emphasis added.) Applicant submits that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Nisser or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Nisser discloses a Fourdrinier paper making machine (Fig. 2) having a container 4 that is supplied with fresh pulp by conduit 6. Nisser further discloses that, if necessary, the air space in head box 1 above liquid levels 8, 8a can be kept either, above or below atmospheric pressure, depending on whether conduit 23 is connected to a source of compressed air or vacuum. As seen from Fig. 2, liquid levels 8, 8a (i.e., the pulp in container 4 and the water in container 5) separate screen 9, upon which a fibrous layer is formed, from the air space in head box 1. Thus, any compressed air introduced through conduit 23 would be unable to impinge upon screen 9 and/or the fibrous layer forming thereupon. Consequently, Nisser fails to teach or suggest distributing a pressurized flow of slurry across a width of the forming fabric to form the continuous web; and

teach or suggest the pressurized chamber being at least partially defined by a plurality of rolls, as recited in part by claim 19, as amended.

The present invention as set forth by claim 8, as amended, has distinct advantages over Nisser and the other cited references. An advantage of the present invention is that the present invention can be joined seamlessly with a multi-roller cluster press to form a compact paper machine.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that claim 19 is now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 20 and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, for which courtesy the Examiner is thanked. Consequently, Applicant has rewritten claims 20 and 21 in independent form, incorporating the subject matter of claim 19 into each. Thus, Applicant submits that claims 20 and 21 are now in condition for allowance, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicant hereby conditionally petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (219) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,



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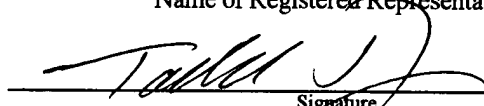
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:
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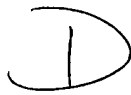
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Title: PAPER MAKING APPARATUS HAVING PRESSURIZED CHAMBER

Application Serial No.: 09/652,554

Group: 1731

Examiner: Jose A. Fortuna



ATTACHMENT A:
MARKED-UP COPY SHOWING AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 12.

Please amend claims 8, 19, 20 and 21 as follows:

8. (Twice Amended) A method of forming a continuous web on a forming fabric, comprising the steps of:

providing a pressurized chamber, said pressurized chamber being fluidly connected to a source of a pressurized fluid;

processing said forming fabric through said pressurized chamber; [and]

distributing a pressurized flow of slurry having a first composition in said pressurized chamber across a width of said forming fabric to form said continuous web; and

ejecting at least a portion of the pressurized fluid against at least one of said forming fabric and said continuous web.

19. (Twice Amended) A method of forming a continuous web on a forming fabric having a width, comprising the steps of:

providing a pressurized chamber, said pressurized chamber being at least partially defined by [at least one of] a plurality of rolls [and a chamber housing], said pressurized chamber being fluidly connected to a source of a pressurized fluid;

processing said forming fabric through said pressurized chamber; and

distributing a pressurized flow of slurry having a first composition in said pressurized chamber across said width of said forming fabric to form said continuous web.

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20. (Amended) A [The] method of [claim 19] forming a continuous web on a forming fabric having a width, [wherein] comprising the steps of:

providing a pressurized chamber, said pressurized chamber being at least partially defined by at least one of a plurality of rolls and a chamber housing, said pressurized chamber being fluidly connected to a source of a pressurized fluid, said providing a pressurized chamber comprising [comprises] the step of providing a roller chamber formed of said plurality of rolls, said roller chamber having at least an inlet nip and an outlet nip;

processing said forming fabric through said pressurized chamber; and

distributing a pressurized flow of slurry having a first composition in said pressurized chamber across said width of said forming fabric to form the continuous web, [wherein] said continuous web being [is] de-watered at said outlet nip after formation thereof.

21. (Amended) A method of [claim 19] forming a continuous web on a forming fabric having a width, [further] comprising the steps of:

providing a pressurized chamber, said pressurized chamber being at least partially defined by at least one of a plurality of rolls and a chamber housing, said pressurized chamber being fluidly connected to a source of a pressurized fluid;

processing said forming fabric through said pressurized chamber;

distributing a pressurized flow of slurry having a first composition in said pressurized chamber across said width of said forming fabric to form said continuous web;

providing a second pressurized chamber, said second pressurized chamber being at least partially defined by being at least one of a plurality of second rolls and a second chamber housing;
and

processing said forming fabric through said second pressurized chamber.

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